



Public Hearing Testimony

Speaker: ^{Mark} Waxenberg

Date: 2/29/08 Bill Number: 5594, 5595

*Testimony of
Mark Waxenberg, Director Government Relations
Connecticut Education Association*

*Before the
Education Committee*

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**Connecticut Education
Association**

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Good afternoon Senator Gaffey, Chairman Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee. My name is Mark Waxenberg and I am Director of Government Relations for the Connecticut Education Association.

I am here to comment on Raised Bill #5594 'An Act Concerning a Corporate Tax Credit and Income Tax Credit for Donations to Education Foundations' and state our support for Raised Bill #5595 'An Act Concerning Genocide Awareness Education'

The Connecticut Education Association opposes Raised Bill #5594 for the following reasons:

1. It takes 6 million dollars out of the state income stream that could be used for education funding in Connecticut.
2. The state tax income that is lost is not equally distributed
3. State tax dollars are used to fund private and/or parochial schools and
4. This legislation would certainly be the precursor for tax credits in Connecticut.

To the best of our knowledge the only personal state income tax deduction of this kind is reserved for the CHET 529 savings accounts administered by the State Treasurer.

The creation for this new State Income Tax Credit for individuals would be breaking new fiscal ground and leave the door wide open for other requests for State Income Tax exemptions.

We have and continue to struggle as a state to fund public education and to "withdraw" 6 million dollars from the states "bank account" and "figuratively" distribute the money to various education foundations across our state is simply a bad idea.

In addition to the fiscal concerns I have stated the Connecticut Education Association has a resolution that states:

A-8. Public Funds for Private Schools/Voucher Plans and Tax Credits

The Connecticut Education Association believes that voucher plans, tuition tax credits, for profit charter schools, or funding formulas that have the same effect – under which pre-K through 12 nonpublic school education is subsidized by tax monies – undermine public education, reduce the support needed to adequately fund public education, and have the potential for racial, economic, and social segregation of children. The Association opposes all attempts to establish and/or implement such plans.

This proposed legislation is in contradiction to this resolution. It is for this reason and the reasons previously stated that the Connecticut Education Association opposes Raised Bill #5594.

Thank you for your attention.